Annotation Style Guide for the Blinker Project

Version 1.0.4

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1 About This Guide

This annotation style guide was created by and for the Blinker project at the University of Pennsylvania. The Blinker project was so named after the "bilingual linker" GUI, which was created to enable bilingual annotators to "link" word tokens that are mutual translations in parallel texts. The parallel text chosen for this project was the Bible, because it is probably the easiest text to obtain in electronic form in multiple languages. The languages involved were English and French, because, of the languages with which the project co-ordinator was familiar, these were the two for which a sufficient number of annotators was likely to be found.

The style guide was created as follows:

1. The project co-ordinator wrote a draft version of the General Guidelines in Section 2.
2. Two groups of annotators each annotated a set of ten randomly selected verse pairs from the Bible bitext, using the General Guidelines draft. There were nine annotators, so one set of ten verse pairs was annotated four times and the other five times.
3. The different annotations for each verse pair set were automatically compared to find differences.
4. The project co-ordinator manually sorted the sources of variation into about 12 categories.
5. Four of the 9 annotators were reconvened, and presented with examples of the different types of inter-annotator variation, one type of variation at a time. For each kind of variation, there was a brief discussion, and then a vote took place on the preferred annotation style.
6. The project co-ordinator compiled the votes and the examples on which they were based into the Detailed Guidelines in Section 3. Some clarifying examples were also added to Section 3 post-hoc.
7. As the annotation project got into full swing, annotators reported a few additional difficult cases. The project co-ordinator emailed the problems to all annotators and collected their votes on the preferred annotation style. The majority opinions were incorporated into new versions of the style guide.

2 General Guidelines

You will be working with pairs of corresponding Bible verses in English and French. Your task will be to specify how words correspond within the paired verses, using the Blinker. For example, when the Blinker presents you with the pair of verses in Example 1, you might link them as in Example 2. As you can see, most words are linked to only one word in the other language. However, this is not always the case, as demonstrated by "toute" and "leur" in this example.

Sometimes you will see the English on the left and the French on the right, sometimes vice versa. You will also notice that we have done some "retokenization" on some of the verses. In both the English and the French, we separate hyphenated words and elisions into separate words. For example, you will see "de le" instead of "du" in French, and "Lord's" will appear as "Lord 's" in English. Although this is an unusual way of writing, it will make it easier for you to link the words correctly.

Two kinds of complications arise when the translation is not very literal.

2.1 Omissions in Translation

You may see words in the verse of one language whose meaning is not contained at all in the verse of the other language. Here is another verse pair from Genesis:

French: *fixe moi ton salaire , et je te le donnerai .*
English: *And he said , Appoint me thy wages , and I will give it .*

Although the English verse begins "And he said," there is no corresponding language in the French verse. When this happens, you should link the extraneous words to the "Not Translated" bar on the corresponding side of the screen, like in Example 3.

Careful! Many of the translations are very non-literal. However, you should only link words to "Not Translated" when you can answer "Yes" to the following question: If the seemingly extraneous words were simply deleted from their verse, would the two verses become more similar in meaning? If the answer is "No" then some words in the translation share some meaning with some of the words that seem extraneous. So, those words are not really extraneous and should not be marked "Not Translated."

2.2 Phrasal Correspondence

The other problem with non-literal translations is that sometimes it is necessary to link entire phrases to each other. Here is another example from Genesis:

English: *And Noah began to be an husbandman , and he planted a vineyard :*
French: *Noà commença á cultiver la terre , et planta de la vigne.*

The words in "to be a husbandman" and in "cultiver la terre" do not correspond one-to-one, although the two phrases mean the same thing in this context. Therefore, the two phrases should be linked as wholes, by linking each word in one to each word in the other, like in Example 4. Likewise, "de la vigne" means "some vines," not "a vineyard." Example 4 shows these phrases as completely interlinked.

The divergence in meaning may be so great for some pairs of passages, that it may seem like the best annotation would be to link both passages to "Not Translated" in their entirety. Whenever you have this urge, please remember that neither version of the Bible from which we drew these verses is a translation of the other. Instead, they are both translations of a third version. Each translation introduces some idiosyncrasies, and when two such idiosyncrasies happen in the same place in the text, the two passages may seem like they have nothing to do with each other. The decision whether to link or not to link should *not* be based on the question of whether one passage could have arisen as a translation of the other. A more appropriate question is: Could both of the passages have arisen as translations of a third.

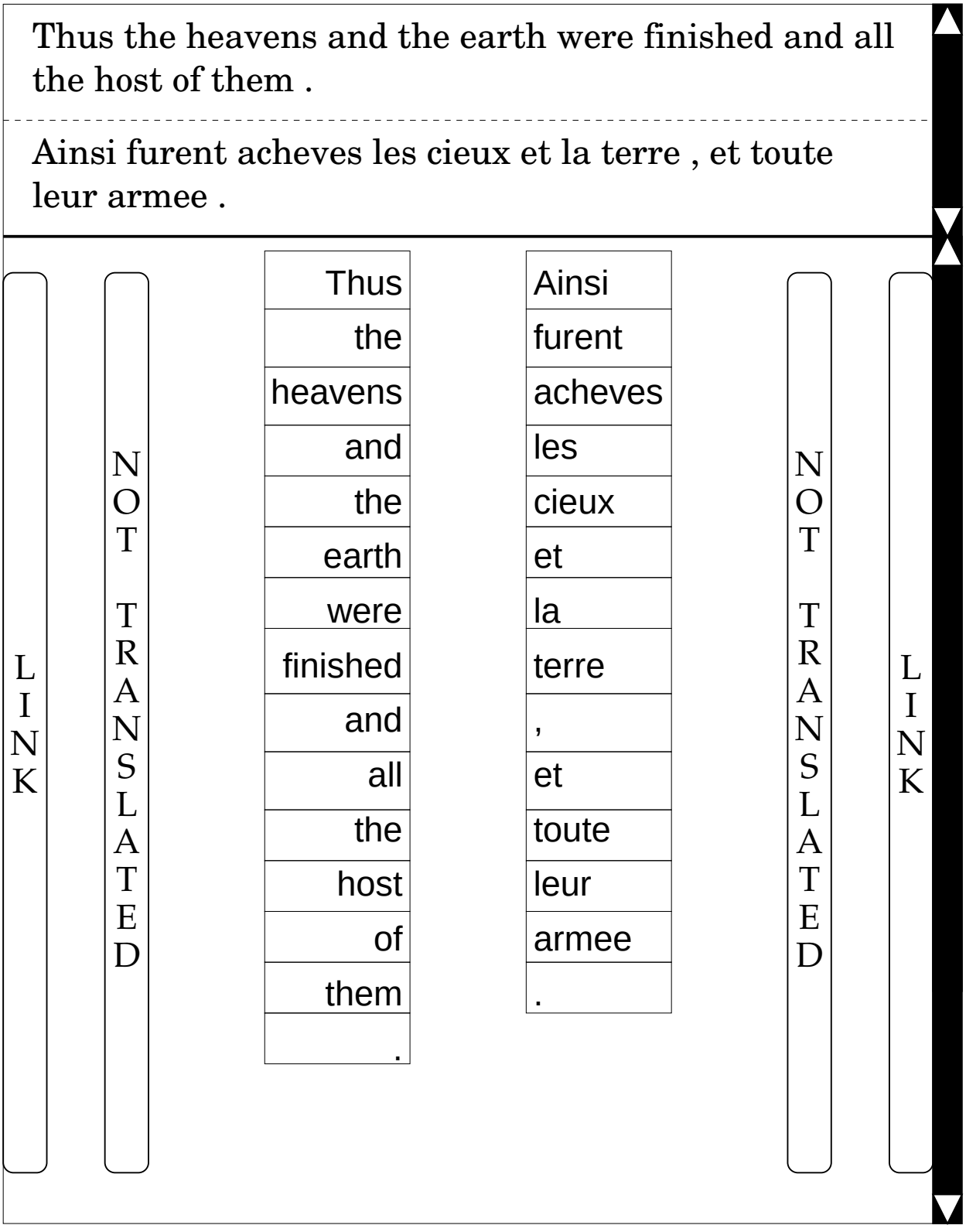

Figure 1: *Example 1.*

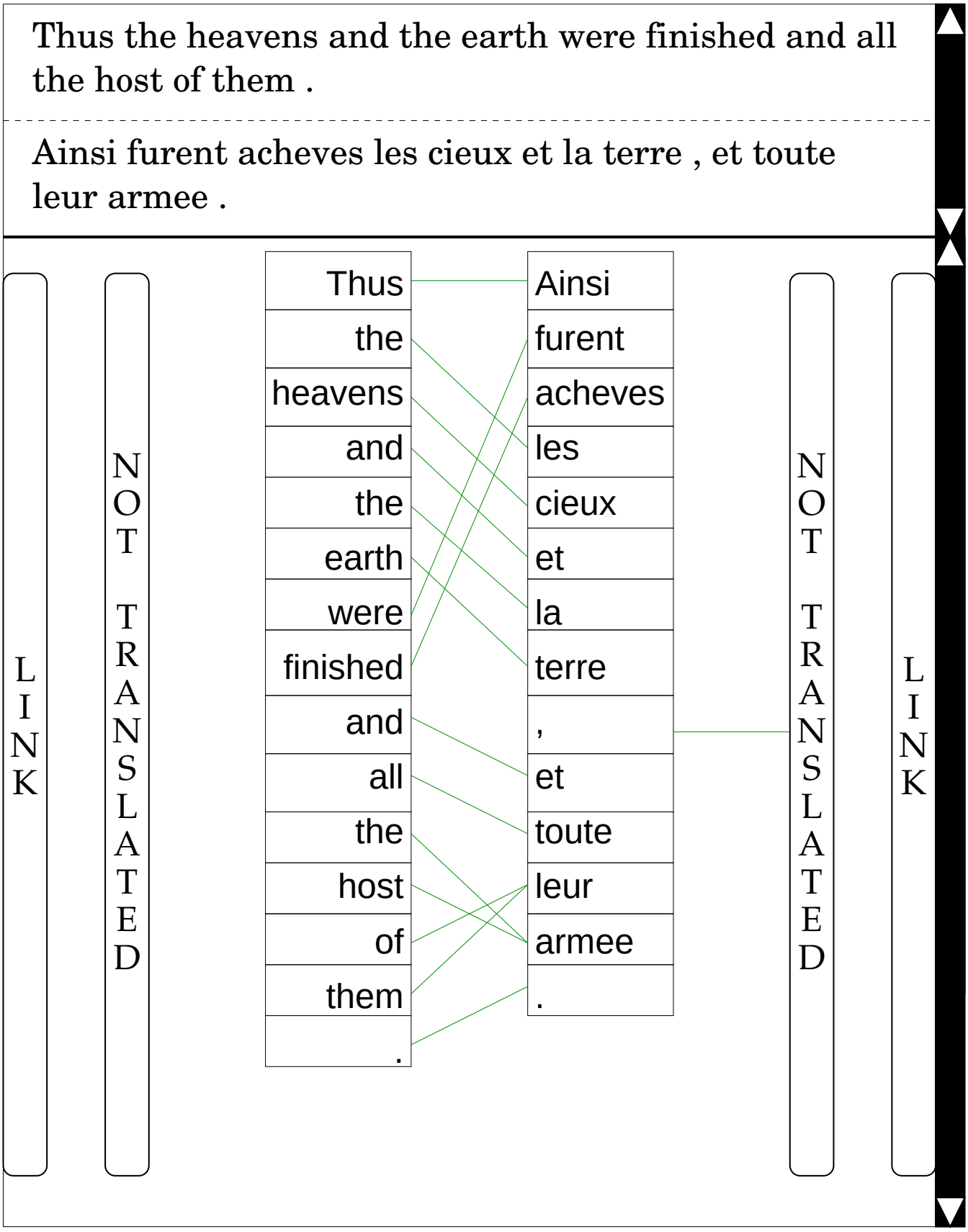

Figure 2: *Example 2.*

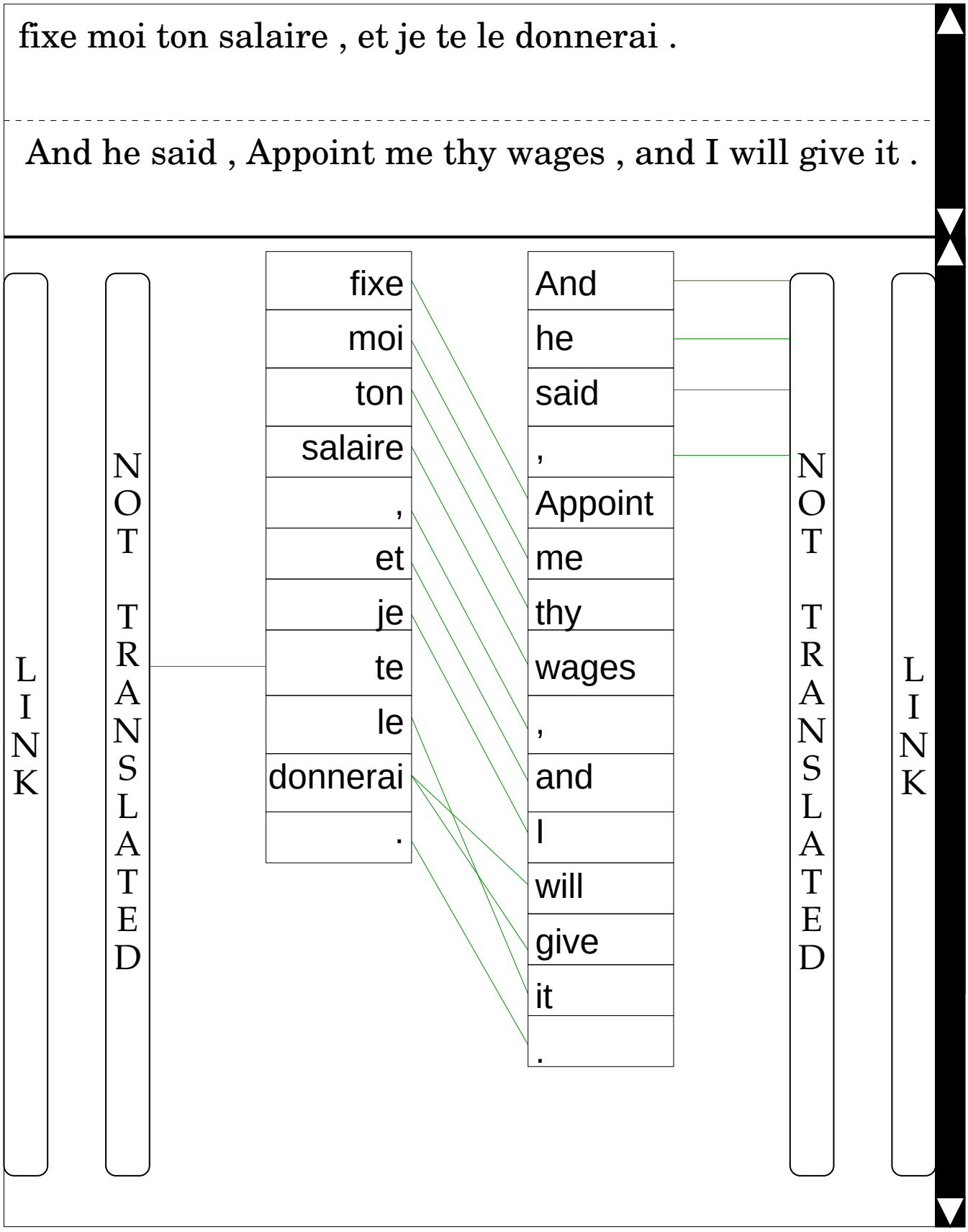

Figure 3: *Example 3.*

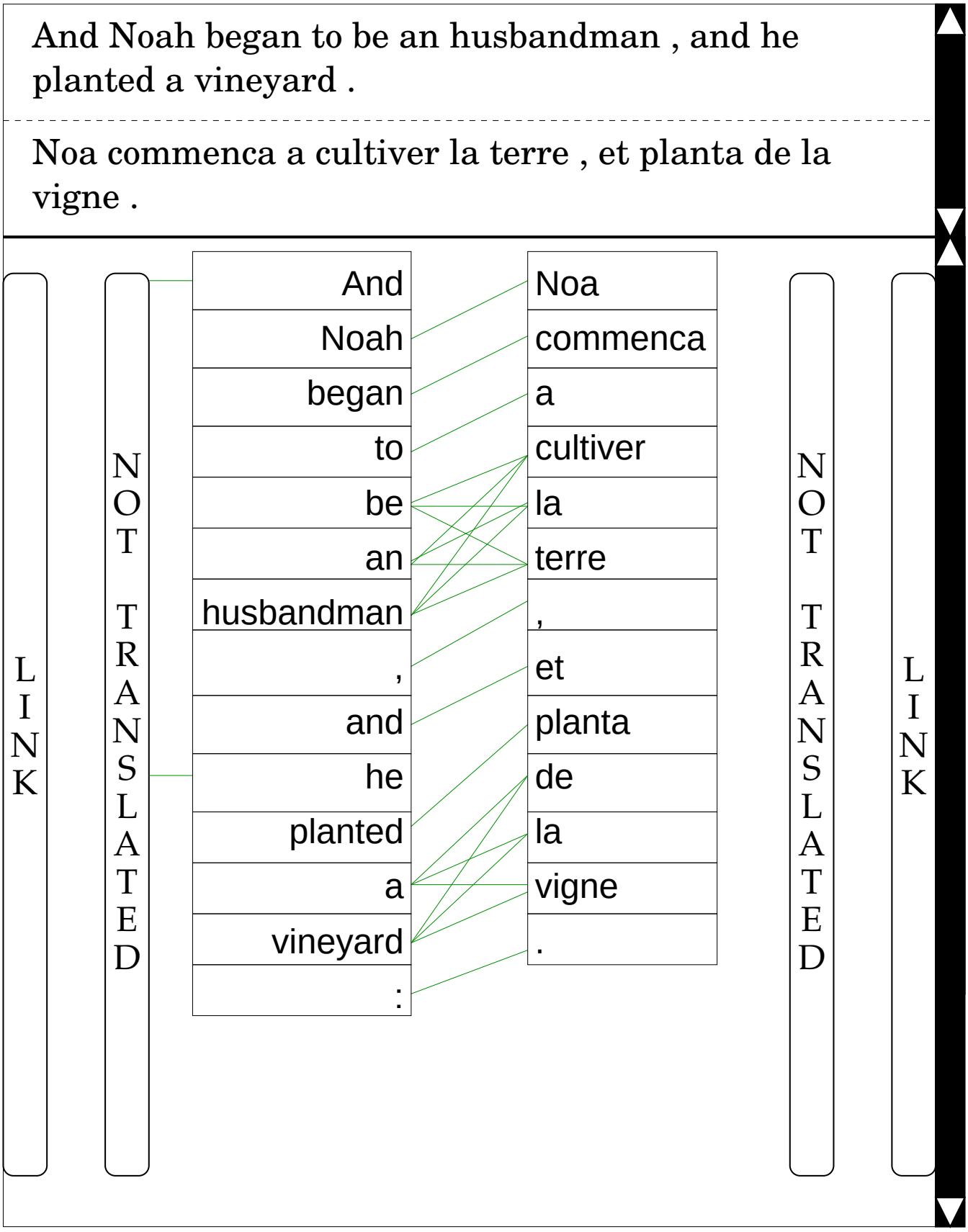

Figure 4: *Example 4.*

3 Detailed Guidelines

You should specify as detailed a correspondence as possible, even when non-literal translations make it difficult to find corresponding words. Here are some examples:

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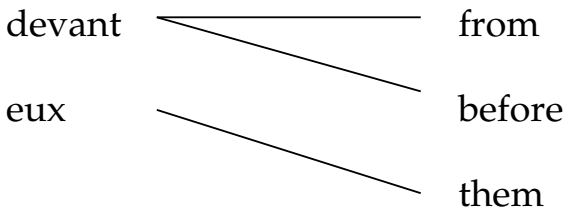
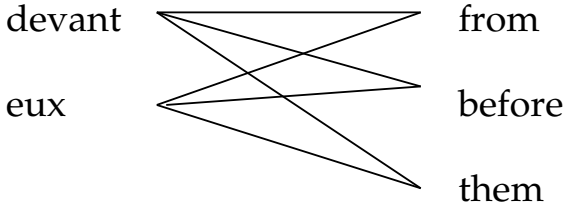


Wrong:



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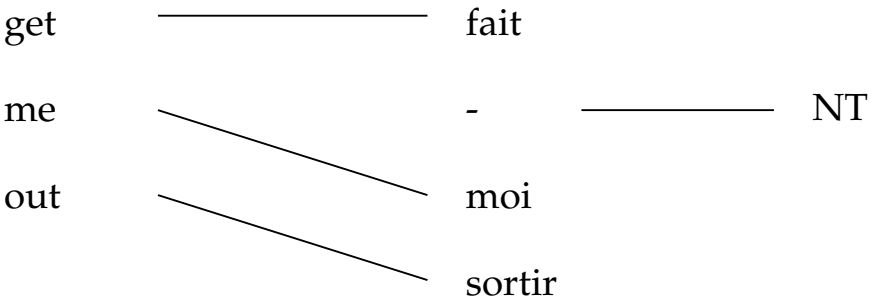

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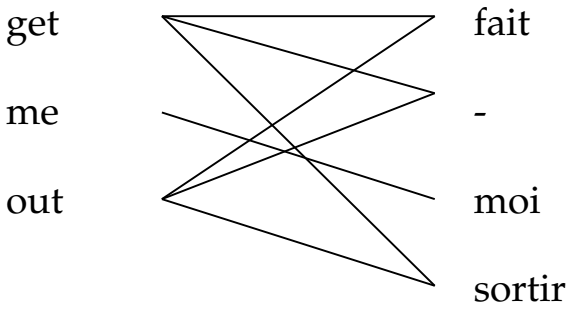

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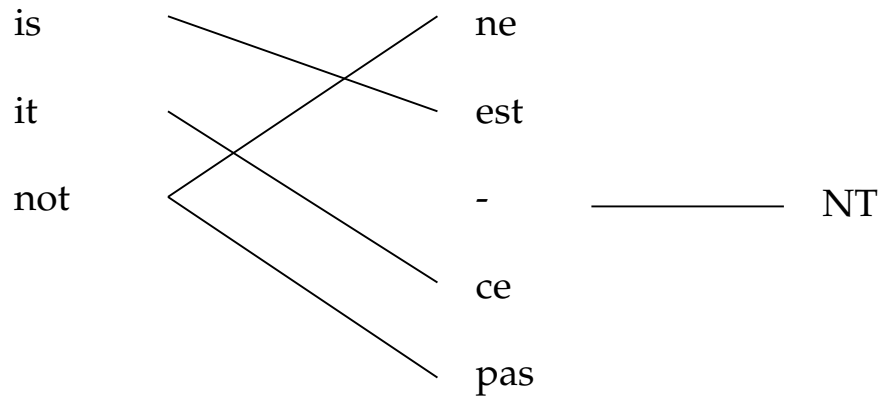

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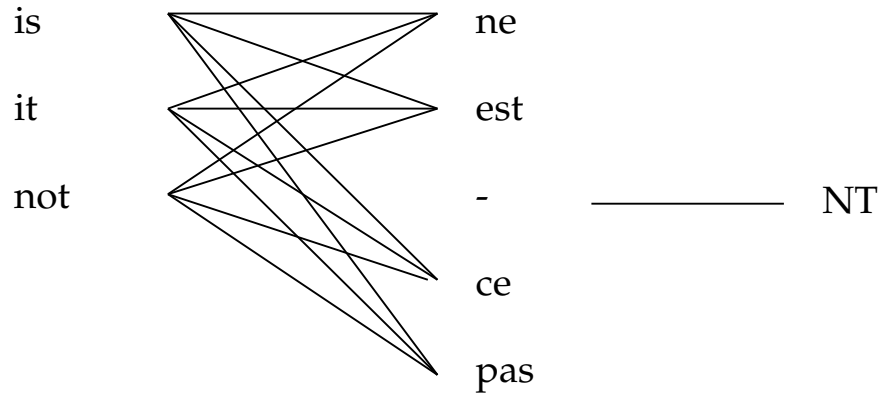
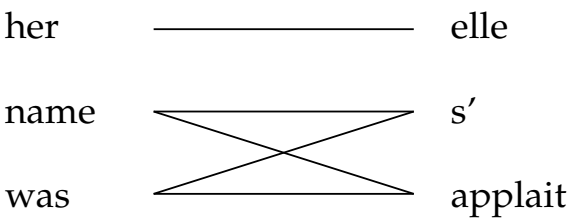


3.1 Idioms and Near Idioms

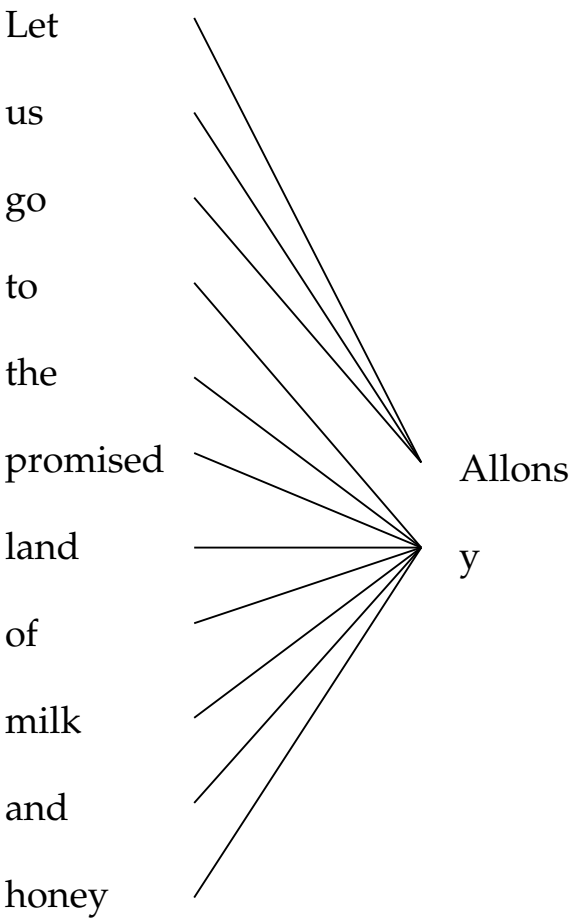
"Frozen" expressions that are unique to one language or the other should be linked as wholes. E.g.:



3.2 Referring Expressions

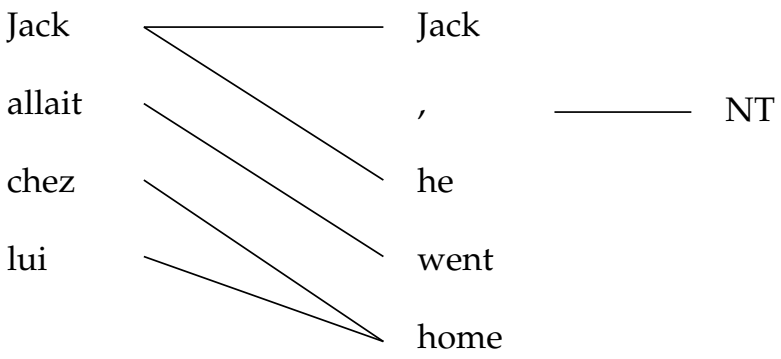
3.2.1 Pronouns and Definite Descriptions

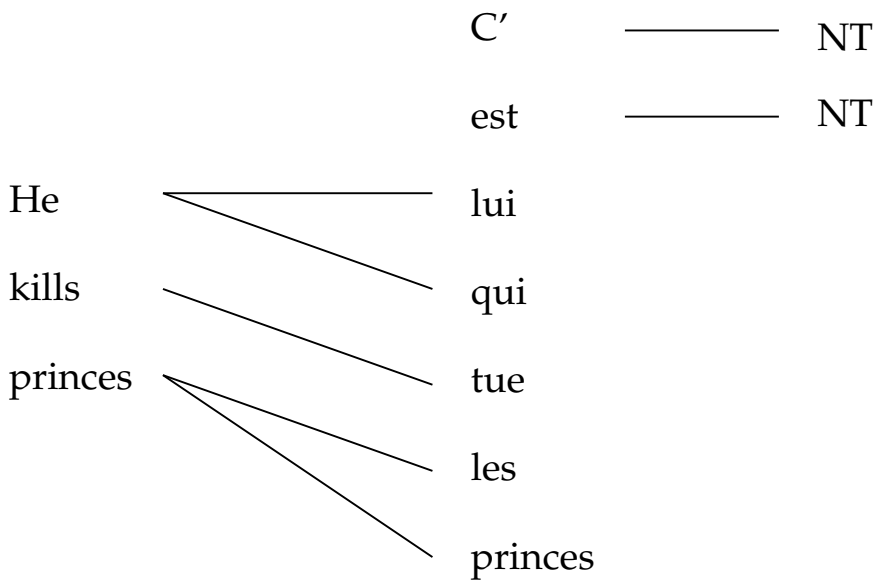
Divergent descriptions of the same thing should be linked as wholes, as in Example 4. This rule holds even when one description is a pronoun:



3.2.2 Resumptive Pronouns

Resumptive pronouns refer to something previously described in the same sentence, called the *antecedent*. When a resumptive pronoun occurs in a verse, but not in its translation, both the resumptive pronoun and its antecedent should be linked to the translation of the antecedent. Relative markers should be treated the same way.

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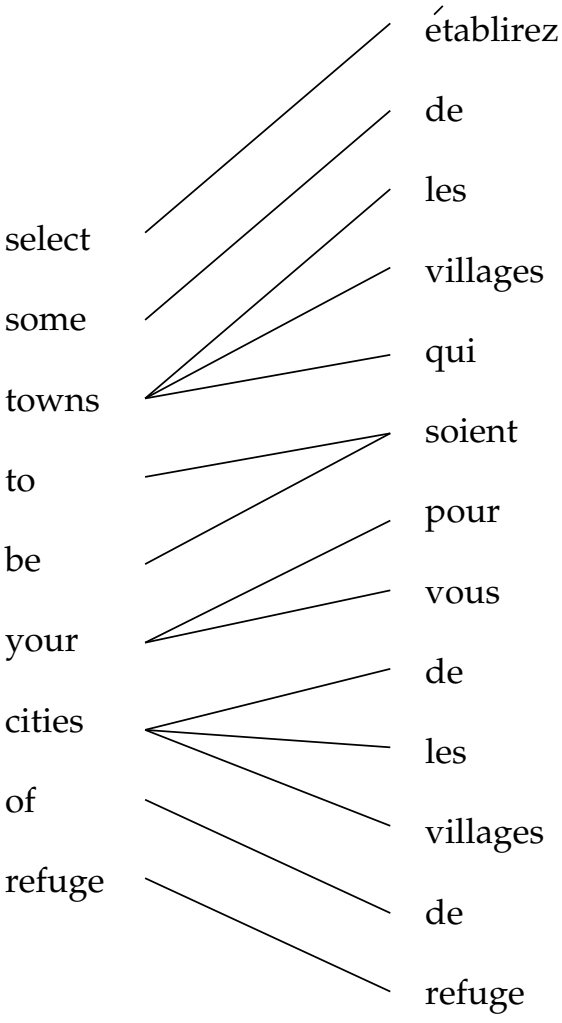
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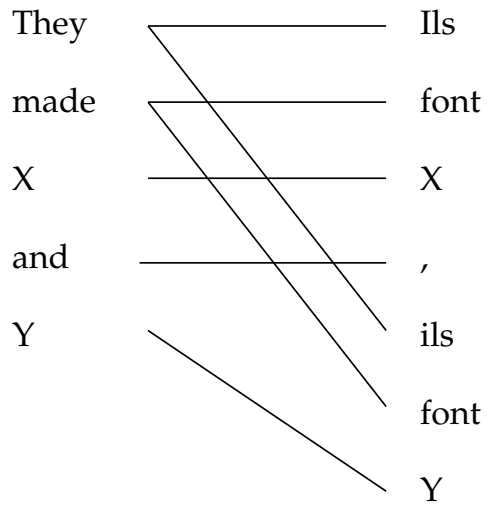
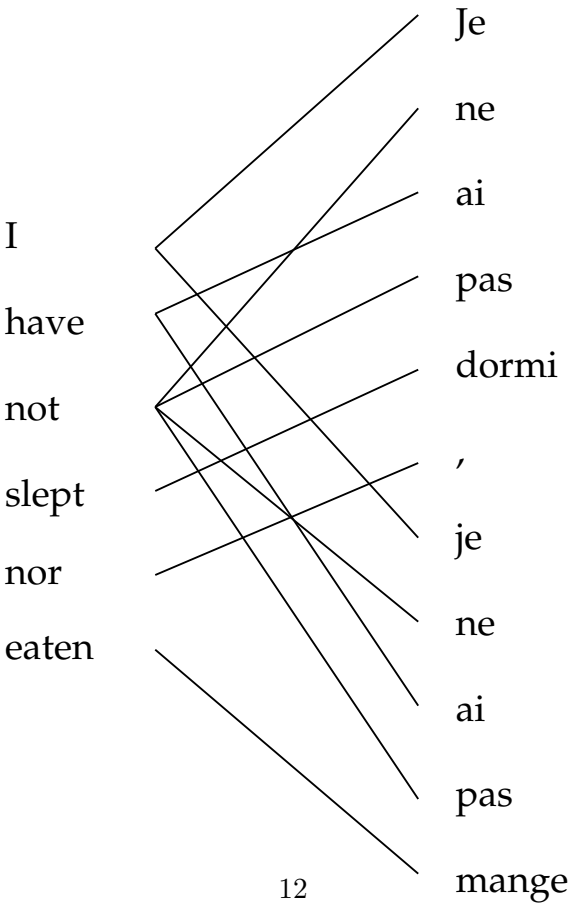
3.2.3 Conjunctive Non-Parallelism

When a piece of text is repeated in a verse but not in its translation, all instances of that piece of text in the first verse should be linked to the one translation:





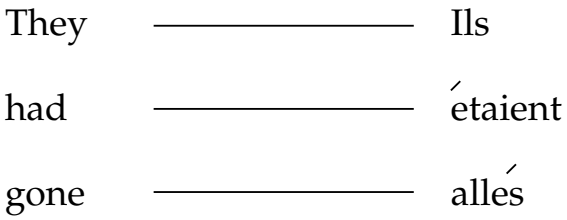
3.3 Verbs

3.3.1 Negation

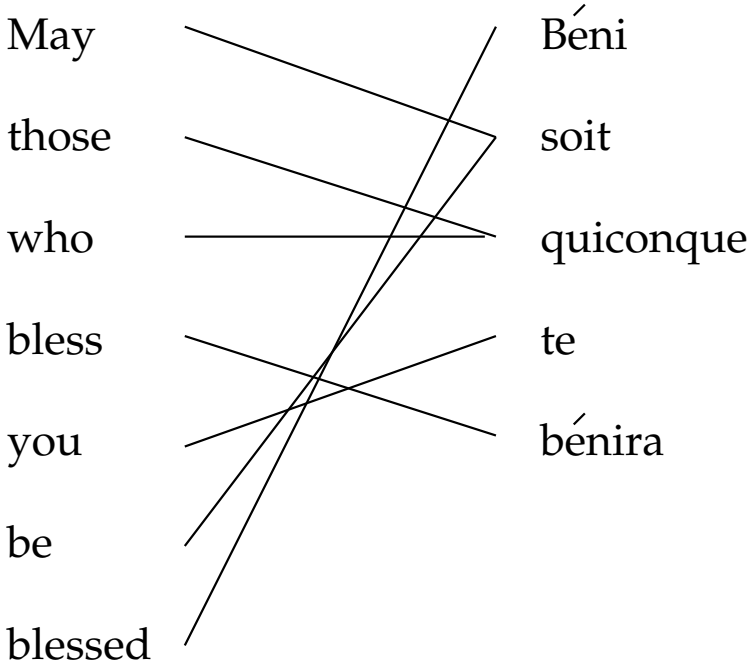
French negation often involves two words, where English uses only one. In all such cases, *both* pieces of the French negation should be linked to the English negation. Examples include *ne . . . pas, ne . . . point, ne . . . rien, ne . . . jamais, ne . . . que*.

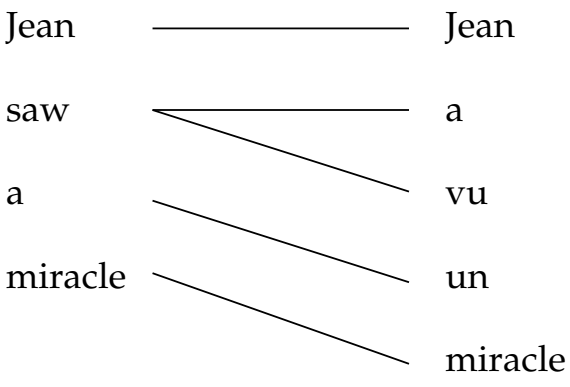
3.3.2 Auxiliary Verbs

Auxiliary verbs should *not* be linked to the main verb in the translation whenever that main verb also has auxiliaries attached. However, auxiliaries often do not match, especially when the verb tenses get slightly altered in translation. When there are auxiliaries in one verse, but not in its translation, both the auxiliaries and the main verb should be linked to the main verb in the translation. E.g.:



But consider *May . . . be / soit*:

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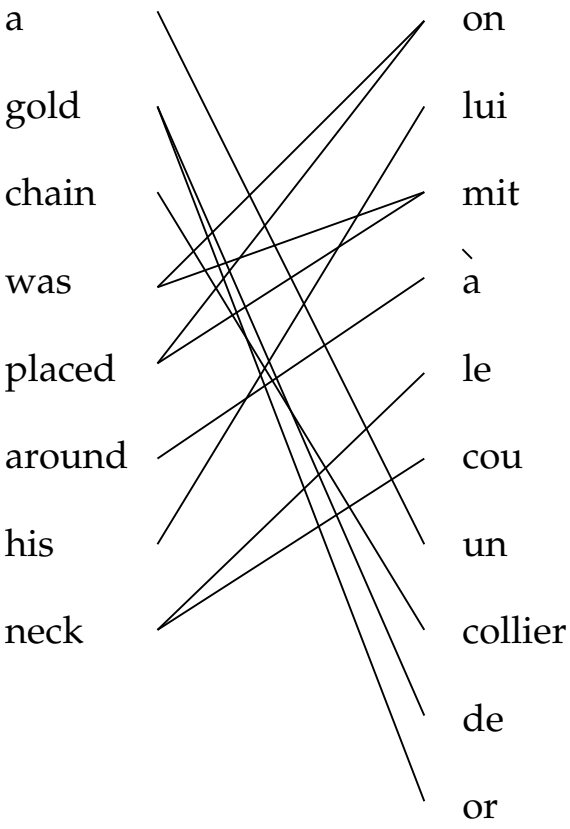
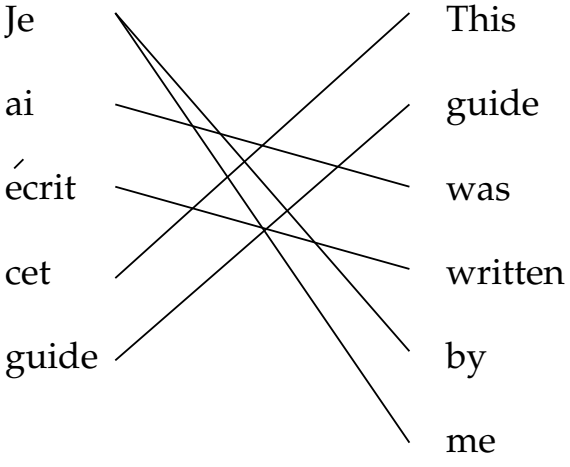
3.3.3 Passivization

The order of corresponding words in a pair of verses may be very different when on verse is in the *passive voice* and the other is in the *active voice*. You should make an effort to tease apart the correspondences, instead of linking whole phrases. E.g.:

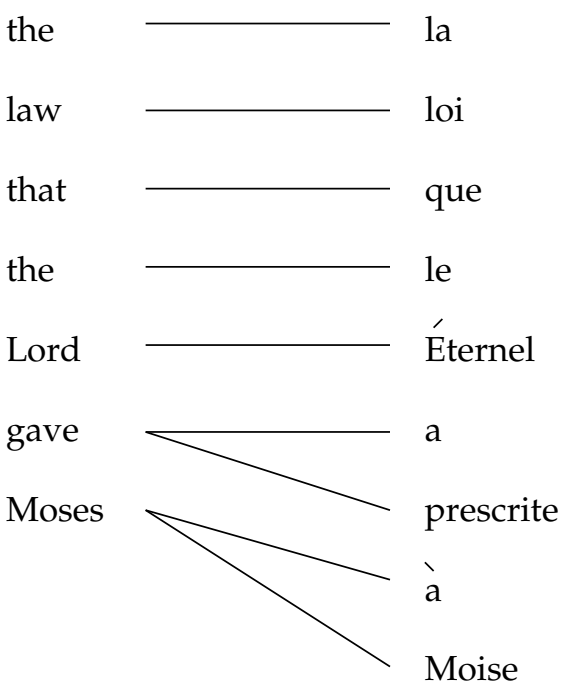


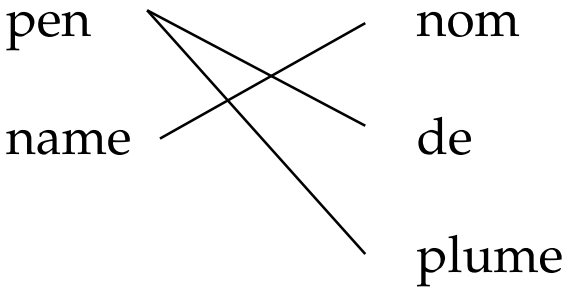


3.4 Prepositions

3.4.1 Extra Prepositions

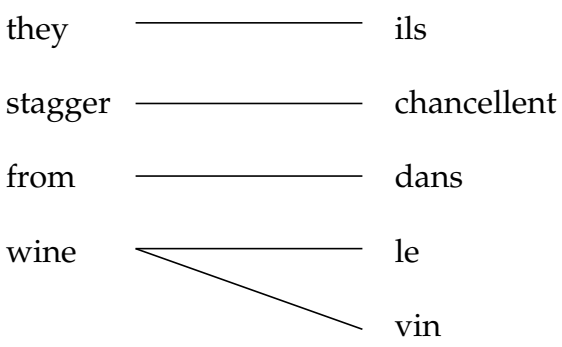
When a verse contains a preposition that does not appear in the translation, the preposition should be linked to the translation of the preposition's object, not the translation of its subject. E.g.:





3.4.2 Divergent Prepositions

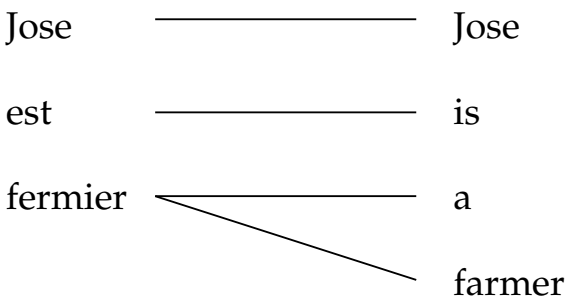
When a piece of text is slightly paraphrased, two prepositions that never mean the same thing literally may need to be linked anyway:

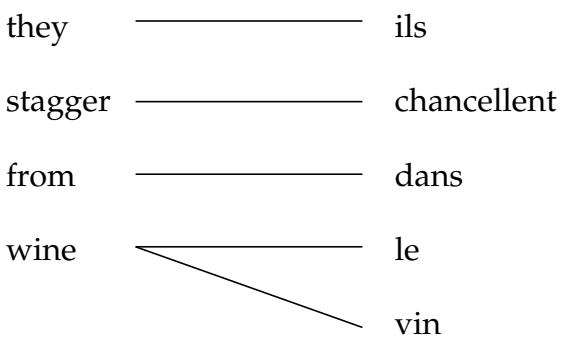


3.5 Determiners

3.5.1 Extra Determiners

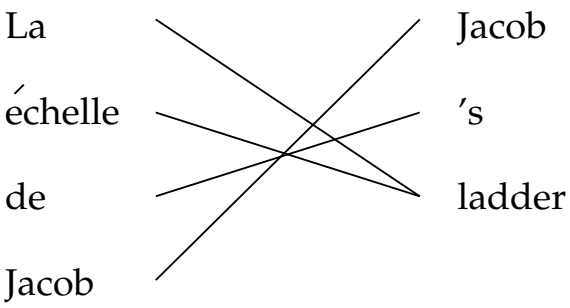
Extra determiners in a verse should be linked together with their noun to the noun's translation:



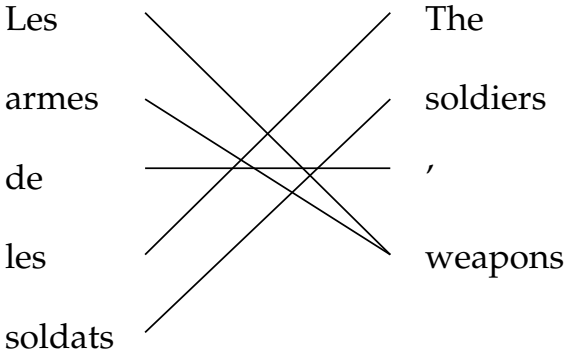


3.5.2 Possessives

English and French possessive markers are different, but easy to identify. They should be linked separately from their nouns:



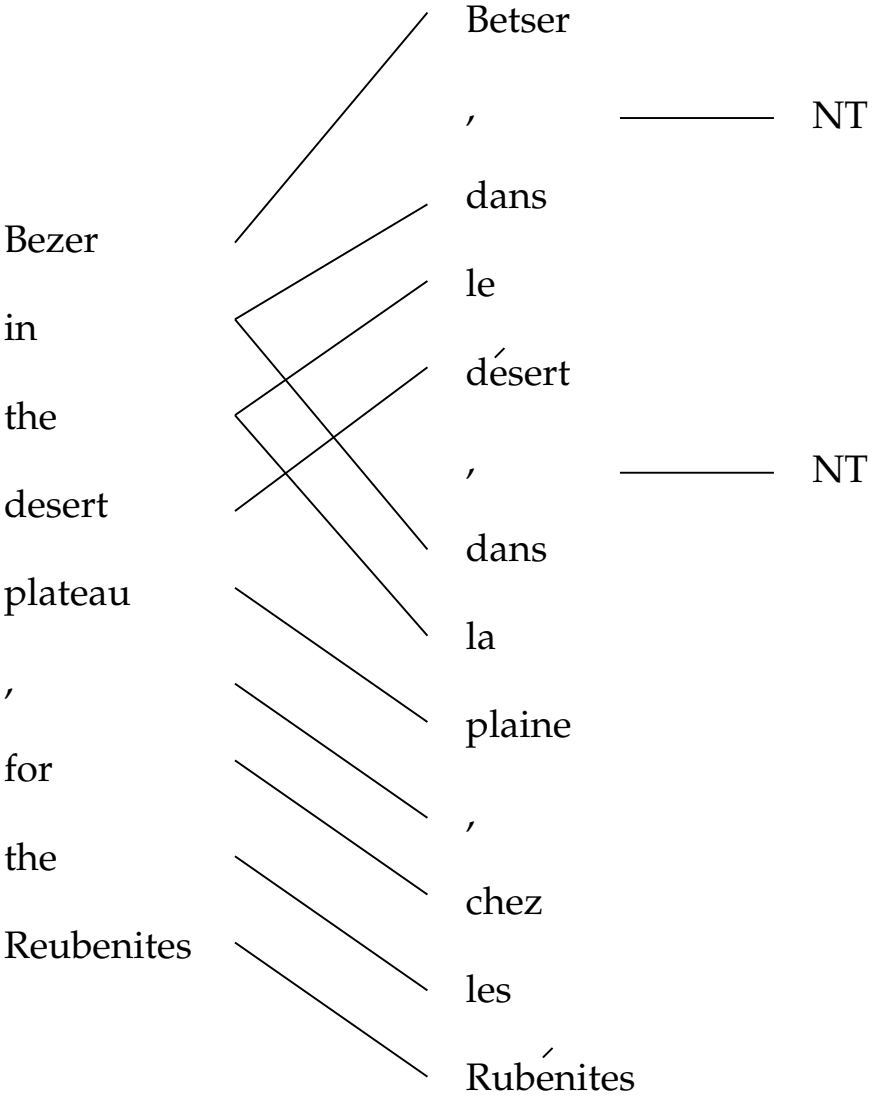
The English plural possessive marker is just an apostrophe:



3.6 Punctuation

3.6.1 Punctuation Series

Sometimes a verse pair will contain several identical (or similar) punctuation marks on each side, but in different quantities. In such cases, the best linking strategy is to link all the words other than the punctuation marks first. Then, link the punctuation marks to minimize the number of "crossing" links. E.g.:



3.6.2 Punctuation and Conjunction

When a series of conjunctions in one verse corresponds to a series of punctuation marks in the other verse, don't hesitate to link word to punctuation marks. E.g, English "and" will often correspond to a French comma.